

Points of View

Author and Public

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

You are quite right in the personal letter which you have sent to me in analyzing my recent criticism of Irving Babbitt's "Democracy and Leadership," published in part in *The Saturday Review*, as generally hostile to Mr. Babbitt's dogmatic spirit, but as favorable to his thought. The paragraphs for the omission of which you apologize were a succinct summary of his ideas in "Democracy and Leadership" so presented as to challenge attention from readers ignorant of him or hostile to him. They were intended to suggest the paradoxical truth that in an age when most creative minds and their intelligent disciples are in one way or another practicing Remy de Gourmont's art of "dissociating ideas" the greatest solvent of contemporary prejudices, sentimentalities, phobias and *pseudodoxia epidemica* of all kinds has been written by the most inveterate dogmatist in America.

It is amusing to find my old acquaintance, Mr. Teusch, in your columns formally reading me out of the communion of Plato's golden men among whom he does me the unspeakable honor of saying that I once belonged, as he himself, he casually acknowledges, still does. It is amusing also to find him making me a follower of Walt Whitman's little Americanism because in my review I built up a comparison which may be abbreviated mathematically thus: As Candide was to France so is "Democracy and Leadership" likely to be to the United States. Mr. Babbitt's book founds its argument upon an acquaintance with European literature which only a very few hundred persons in America possess. Its author is almost the sole representative in this country of the conservative criticism of literature and life of which M. Seillière is perhaps the acknowledged chief in France and of which Maurice Barrès was a great auxiliary. Of course, until criticism of that kind has had a vigorous growth in America we shall remain adolescent in our æsthetic experience as a nation. In saying that America is not prepared to understand Mr. Babbitt or to give hospitality to such a debate as the multiplication of men of his faith would produce I was not paying our provincial nation a compliment. I was regretfully and a little ironically pointing out the wide gulf between Mr. Babbitt and his audience. The irony was double-edged. I wish that it were possible to make the American people as sensitive to the edge turned toward them as Mr. Babbitt's champion has shown himself towards the opposite blade.

MERRITT Y. HUGHES.
Berkeley, California.

Mr. Steuart Protests

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

Through the courtesy of my friends Messrs. Little, Brown & Company I have received part of *The Saturday Review of Literature* for December 6, in which generous space is devoted to my Life of Robert Louis Stevenson. To have both an editorial and a review is an honor I appreciate. The editorial is animated by that spirit of enlightened fairness which we expect from a great organ of public opinion in the United States. Will you, however, permit me to call attention to one rather important inaccuracy? Quite inadvertently, I am sure, you class me with the detractors of Stevenson. That is an error. I am not a detractor; on the contrary, I am an ardent admirer, as any attentive reader of my book will discern and as the leading critics on both sides of the Atlantic have noted.

The so-called review by Mr. Frank Swinnerton is set to a different tune. I do not for a moment presume to criticize editorial procedure, though I may be surprised that with such wealth of native-born literary talent in the United States it should have been thought worth while to import a farago of prejudices, misrepresentations, and ineptitudes from Britain. Though purporting to be a review Mr. Swinnerton's article is in reality a soured, splenetic outpouring of personal rancor. He avers in the high *ex cathedra* manner that I do not know Stevenson literature. Is the assertion, I wonder, due to the fact that I own no indebtedness to a certain book by Mr. F. Swinnerton? The book in question is doubtless not so well known as its author might or would desire; but I have seen it. I have even made a valiant attempt to read it. If I was discouraged before reaching the bitter end it

was for reasons which may be obvious and need not be stated.

Many people have written of Stevenson and his works; but scarcely any of them with less insight, less appreciation, or real understanding than Mr. Swinnerton. Nor does he seem to be at all better qualified to judge anything written on Stevenson by others. His critical judgments may indeed be dismissed as verging perilously on the worthless.

As to his little homily on egotism, my egotism,—an edifying moral effort which I hope your readers have taken to heart,—I freely admit he appears to be well qualified to speak on the subject with all the authority of one who is himself especially endowed. I dip my flag to him.

But that is by the way. Where a whole article is vitiated by something scarcely distinguishable from spleen and spite it might seem useless to pick out particular instances of misrepresentation. But to illustrate my critic's knowledge and competency I select three examples:

(1) Mr. Swinnerton states that the story of the Stevenson-Henley quarrel is told in full by a previous biographer. That statement is untrue.

(2) He states or implies that my opinions are borrowed—possibly from himself. That also is untrue.

(3) He writes: "The names of Sir Sidney Colvin, Mr. Edmund Gosse, Mr. Lloyd Osbourne are not among those who have helped Mr. Steuart." The most important part of that statement is likewise untrue. In my book I explicitly acknowledge my indebtedness to Mr. Lloyd Osbourne, whom I found most courteous and helpful throughout.

Instances of misstatements and misrepresentations might be multiplied, but I must not take up your space in exposing them. They are equally untrue.

One final point I may mention. Possibly with a smarting sense of his own neglected claims, Mr. Swinnerton says: "Mr. Steuart writes like a man who is intent on the thought that his book will be incomparably the best book on the subject." Seeing that Mr. Swinnerton was in the field the thought was indeed a daring one. But (my egotism blushes over the avowal) the consensus of the best critical opinion alike in America and England finds the thought justified by the performance.

Yours truly,
JOHN A. STEUART.
Edinburgh, Scotland.

The Reader's Guide

(Continued from preceding page)

tively little written about as Robert Lynd, George Saintsbury and J. S. Squire. Altogether I have lately proved it to be as good as a small library for a long train or steam-er journey.

H. M. D., Hillsdale, Mich., asks for a book or books on Spanish music, either of the last fifty years or folk-lore music.

CARL VAN VECHTEN'S "The Music of Spain" (Knopf), that was for some time the only book on this subject in English, is now out of print, but meantime it has been treated at some length in the later chapters of J. B. Trend's "Picture of Modern Spain" (Houghton Mifflin), historically, regionally and with reference to types of dance and song. As this inquirer reads Spanish also he can make use of the comprehensive "bibliographical guide to secular Spanish music" which takes up several pages of this book—one which I recommend also to M. P. H., New York, as an addition to a list of books for an intending traveler.

G. M., Elyria, O., asks what novels are included in Galsworthy's "The Forsyte Saga" (Scribner).

HERE it rests," says Mr. Galsworthy in the preface, "preserved in its own juice: 'The Sense of Property' as set forth in five books: 'The Man of Property,' 'In Chancery,' and 'To Let,' with two 'interludes,' the novelettes 'Indian Summer of a Forsyte' and 'Awakening.' To these may now be added 'The White Monkey' (Scribner, 1924), which goes on with the career of that unnecessary young woman Fleur and introduces the most lifelike Pekinese in literature.

If correspondents knew the pressure on this department and how few letters in proportion to those received can be answered in print, they would always put at least mailing addresses on questions. A stamped envelope beats that.

The New Books

(Continued from page 484)

Juvenile

MEMOIRS OF A DONKEY. By COUNTESS DE SÉGUR. Translated from the French by MARGUERITE FELLOWS MELCHER. Macmillan. 1924. \$1.00.

This little book is worth a dozen of the more pretentious volumes for children. It has long been a favorite in France and is now added to those gaily bound small volumes in the Macmillan Little Library Series that are proving veritable gold nuggets for the four to eight year olds. A tale to please both boys and girls is this engaging story of the gifted and sagacious Cadichon who decided to write his memoirs to disprove the familiar fallacy: "Stupid as a donkey." How this diminutive French donkey was naughty in his youth; how he repented and was brought back to the friendship of his comrades and masters; how he nearly perished saving his little mistress from a fire; and how he showed that he could perform better than the circus donkey,—all these adventures and more are recounted with great charm and spirit, and always for the delight of the telling, not because the author thought they ought to make good reading for children. Like Hans Andersen and the Brothers Grimm, the Countess De Ségur seems able to endow the smallest happening, such as the nibbling of a thistle, or a ride through a country lane, with an almost uncanny significance. Like them, too, she is not afraid to introduce a little sadness into the story, which fortunately does not lapse into sentimentality. The translator and illustrator have caught this same spirit and the result is one of the most enchanting and pictorially gay books we have met in many a day.

THE BLOSSOMING OF PATRICIA-THIELS. By LIDA LARRIMORE. Penn. 1924. \$2.00.

Here is another story of one of those "quaint" little girls who are "not like other children." Patricia, the youthful heroine comes to live with a strong-minded spinster Aunt for whom she has been named, and who represses her and makes her wear queer clothes. But, to my way of thinking she suffers far more at the hands of the author who has put her into the made-over clothes of such literary older sisters as Pollyanna, Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm, and Anne of Green Gables. In this particular case they seem a bit threadbare. But perhaps girls of from eight to ten, for whom the story is evidently intended, will not mind, especially as the book is attractively made and illustrated with many pictures, some of them in color.

BOYS' GAMES AMONG THE NORTH AMERICAN INDIANS. By Edith Snow. Dutton. \$1.50.

ELF KING'S FLOWERS. By Aunt Sadie (Sarah Phelps Stokes Halkett). Dutton. \$2.

OLD ENGLISH TALES RETOLD. By Harriot Buxton Barbour. Macmillan.

Poetry

SHIP'S LOG. By GRACE HAZARD CONKLING. Knopf. 1924. \$2.

This volume cannot but prove a disappointment to one who has followed Mrs. Conkling's previous work with appreciative pleasure. The author's lyric gift seems somehow to have deserted her; her power to treat beautiful themes appealingly appears almost to have vanished; she has allowed herself to fall victim to a distressing carelessness of workmanship, and has permitted a *penchant* for the newer poetic forms and diction to overwhelm a talent as obviously in need of rhythmic restraint as is that of Sara Teasdale or of A. E. Housman. Such a piece as the following, for example, strikes one as singularly forced and artificial from one who could write a poem so memorable as "I Have an Understanding with the Hills":

MONOTONOUS

Not while you labor from guilt noon of a November day
Till ten o'clock of a brittle November night
To carve my love like a piece of ivory
Into a shape less difficult for you to recognize.

It is to be regretted that the author has not put her work into a shape "less difficult to recognize" as poetry. The "brittle" night represents but the striking form of imagery that is strikingly inappropriate; and similar breaches of artistic taste occur throughout the book. Only in two or three

poems, indeed, does the author remind us what she is like at her best; and only in the piece of blank verse entitled "Maine Woods in Winter" does she seem to be writing in response to that urgent and compelling impulse which is the *sine qua non* of the best poetry.

CAPE COD IN POETRY. Edited by JOSHUA FREEMAN CROWELL and FLORENCE HATHAWAY CROWELL. Four Seas. 1924. \$2.

It would be difficult if not impossible to compile an anthology of excellent poems typical either of a narrowly limited geographical region or of the authors native to that region. That the limited range and artificial confines of such an anthology would endanger its literary quality is amply demonstrated by the present collection of Cape Cod poems. While undoubtedly this book will prove of interest to any lover of New England; yet it will make small appeal on the grounds of its poetic merit, for the majority of the poems it contains are of the very essence of mediocrity. Some notable writers are included, it is true—Edna St. Vincent Millay, Conrad Aiken, Katherine Lee Bates, Harry Kemp, and others as well known; but even the selections from these poets fall many degrees short of excellence.

THE POETS OF THE GREEK ANTHOLOGY. (Broadway Translations). By F. A. WRIGHT. Dutton. 1924. \$3.

This companion to Mr. Wright's earlier volume of translations from the anthology, "The Girdle of Aphrodite," contains a dozen biographical and critical studies interlarded with new renderings of epigrams not included in "The Girdle." Such a book has been much needed, for nothing of the sort has existed in English in spite of the subject's peculiar fascinations. Mr. Wright gives us glimpses of Greek literary life for nearly a thousand years, from the Alexandria of the Ptolemies to the Byzantium of the lovely Theodora, the circus mime and empress in whose reign Sancta Sophia was built. These minor lyrics are true kin of Horace and Herrick, but closer to the latter—exquisite and homely, celebrating love and wine and country life. In their verses, the traveler stops to drink at the well in the orchard, the fishermen eat their barley cakes by the seashore, and the swallows twitter again at the coming of spring. Mr. Wright has written of them with much quiet charm, and the format of his book is worthy of the contents. It is a treat for the literary gourmet.

SONG OF THE BROAD-AXE. By WALT WHITMAN, with Illustrations Cut on Wood by WHARTON H. ESHERICK. Philadelphia: The Centaur Press. 1924. \$7.50.

This is the first book issued by the Centaur Press, an admirable example of typography, with a format excellently adapted to Whitman's poem. Mr. Escherick's woodcuts are powerful, with a rhythmic sweep that comports with Whitman's lines. This very satisfactory edition is limited to four hundred copies.

SLANTS. By CLIFFORD GESSLER. Honolulu: Star-Bulletin. 1924.

An attractive cover and attractive illustrations in tint make this book of verses pleasant to the eye, and the atmosphere of some of the poems is exotically attractive. But the verse is mainly ephemeral. The poet seems to succeed best in "free" forms. He has contributed to *Poetry*, *Contemporary Verse*, *The Midland*, etc.

THE IRON STRING. By Albert W. Draves. Dor-rance.

"TURN UP THE CORNERS OF YOUR MOUTH AND SMILE." By Mattie Lois Fest.

SONG OF THE BROAD-AXE. By Walt Whitman. Philadelphia: Centaur Press.

SONGS AND VERSES. By Whyte Melville. Scribner's. \$5.

POEMS FOR THE NEW AGE. By Simon Felshin. Seltzer.

AN ANTHOLOGY OF VERSE. Edited by Newman I. White, and Walter C. Jackson. Durham, N. C.: Trinity College Press.

DREAM TAPESTRIES. By Louise Morey Bowman. Macmillan.

THE LETTERS OF GLAUCON AND SARAI NORTH-AMPTON. Mass.: Norman Fitts. \$1.50.

WINDS AND TIDES. By Juliet Calhoun Isham. Putnam's.

THE RETROSPECT OF FRANÇOIS VILLON. By George Heyer. Oxford. \$1.50.

ASHES OF ROSES. By Marjorie Barstow Greenbie. New York: Rider Press.

SONNETS. By M. C. S. Pasadena Calif.: Upton Sinclair.

The World of Rare Books

By FREDERICK M. HOPKINS

FINAL SALE OF CHEW LIBRARY

PART II of the library of the late Beverly Chew, consisting of English Literature after 1800 and including first editions and presentation copies, together with an important collection of bibliography, was sold at the Anderson Galleries, January 5, 6 and 7, 857 lots bringing \$14,507.50, making a total of \$150,229 for the entire library, the record sale of the season up to this date.

A few of the more interesting and valuable lots and the prices realized were the following:

Andrews (William Loring). "Among My Books," 8vo, cloth, New York, 1894. One of 10 Japan vellum copies, with author's presentation inscription. \$52.50.

Andrews. "New Amsterdam, New Orange, New York," with illustrations and maps, 8vo, cloth, New York, 1897. One of 30 copies on Japan vellum and dedication copy. \$60.

Andrews. "Gossip About Book Collecting," 2 vols., 8vo, Japan paper wrappers, New York, 1900. One of 32 copies on Japan vellum. \$60.

Wise (J. T.). "The Ashley Library, a Catalogue of Printed Books, Manuscripts and Autograph Letters Collected by Thomas J. Wise," 4 vols., 4to, buckram, London, 1922-23. One of 200 copies. Purchaser to assume Mr. Chew's subscription and complete set. \$105.

Bibliography. "The Library of William Andrews Clark, Jr.," collated and compiled by R. E. Cowan and William Andrews Clark, Jr., 13 vols., 4to, boards, San Francisco, 1920-22. One of 50 copies. \$200.

Bibliography. "Catalogue of the Library of Robert Hoe," 4 vols., morocco by Bradstreet, New York, 1911-12. Anderson auction catalogue with prices. \$40.

Bibliography. "Catalogue of the Library

of the Late John Henry Wrenn," compiled by Harold B. Wrenn, 5 vols., 8vo, buckram, Austin, Texas, 1920. One of 120 copies. \$200.

Carroll (Lewis). "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland," 12mo, cloth, London, 1866. First edition. \$180.

Bookplates. An almost complete collection of the bookplates engraved by E. D. French, the larger part proofs on Japan vellum and India paper, many signed, many plates showing several states, with some duplicates, 486 pieces. \$130.

Grolier Club. David McN. Stauffer's "American Engravers Upon Copper and Steel," 2 vols., 8vo, boards, New York, 1907. One of 300 copies. \$87.50.

Keats (John). "Poems," 12mo, elaborate levant morocco binding by Club Bindery, London, 1817. First edition. \$570.

Keats. "Endymion," 8vo, half morocco, London, 1818. First edition. \$390.

Keats. "Lamia," 12mo, morocco, by Bedford, London, 1820. First edition. \$430.

Poe (Edgar Allan). "Tamerlane and Other Poems," facsimile of the first edition of 1827; together with a reprint of the 1845 edition, 2 vols., small 4to and folio, limp boards, San Francisco, 1923. Printed in a limited edition of 150 copies by John Henry Nash. \$220.

SALE OF AMERICANA

AMERICANA, including selections from the libraries of the Hon. Franklin D. Roosevelt, John Brenton Copp of Mystic, Conn., with additions, was sold at the Anderson Galleries, January 9. A set of the first editions of Cook's "Voyages," 10 vols., London, 1773-88, first editions, brought \$185; John Hubbard's "A Monumental Gratitude Attempted in a Poetical Relation

of the Danger and Deliverance of Several Members of Yale-College in Passing the Sound from South-hold to New-Haven, Aug. 20th, 1726," 12mo, sewn, New-London, 1727, apparently the only copy ever offered at auction, \$85; John Farmer's "The Emigrant's Guide," 18mo, leather, Albany, 1831, \$45; Muller's "Voyages from Asia to America, for Completing the Discoveries of the North West Coast of America," 4to, calf, London, 1761, \$77.50; John Reid's "The American Atlas," folio, New York, 1796, \$31; and "A Sermon Preached on the Death of George Washington, Delivered in Stonington-Port, Connecticut, January 14th, 1800," by Clark Brown, Stonington-Port, 1800, rare, \$52.50.

"ONE THOUSAND BEST BOOKS"

AS the "fruit of twenty years of living and working among books and readers," Asa Don Dickinson, librarian of the University of Pennsylvania, has prepared an annotated list of "One Thousand Best Books," which with its commentary, notes, and references fills a volume of some 400 pages. It is further described as "the household guide to a lifetime's reading," and on a sub-title page phrased in antique manner it is called "A Variorum List, that is to Say a Noble Literarie Garlande Assembled from Numberless Nosegayes Plucked by Many Scholars of Pleasing Taste, and Vaste Erudition, the Whole Woven Cunningly Together by a Patient Drudge, one Asa Don Dickinson, now Bibliothecarie to the Universitie of Pensilvania." Beginning with Thomas à Kempis and ending with Emile Zola, Mr. Dickinson's list ranges through the world's literature. The authors are listed first by dates, then by nationality, again by endorsements with classification by subjects, and a final index of titles and lists of one hundred best books to be read during each year from 1925 to 1934. Booklovers are under great obligations to Mr. Dickinson for this book. The volume is published by Doubleday, Page & Co.

NOTE AND COMMENT

THE State of Massachusetts has created the Walden Pond Reservation, including Walden Pond, Concord, made famous by association with Emerson, Hawthorne, and Thoreau.

Joseph Conrad is the subject of the latest booklet in Doubleday, Page & Co.'s series of autobiographical sketches. It contains a concise account of the author and his works and a complete bibliography.

Part VI of the library of the late William F. Gable of Altoona, Penn., was sold at the American Art Galleries, January 8 and 9, 1,020 lots bringing \$15,080, the total of this and last season's sales amounting to \$135,171.

Through the generosity of a group of friends of Harvard under the leadership of John B. Stetson, Jr., who happened to be in Paris, when the library of Edouard Maura, rich in French rarities of various periods and branches of literature, came into the market, the collection was purchased and presented to Harvard Library. This collection fills many gaps in the library's collection of French literature and makes an addition of great value.

Volume XVII, Part I, of the "Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America" has been issued to members of the society. It contains papers by Captain Bainbridge Colby, U. S. A., on "Bibliography as an Aid to Biography"; "The Guide to Historical Literature," by Professor George M. Dutcher; "A Bibliography of Thomas Pringle's 'Afar in the Desert,'" by George W. Robinson; and descriptions of the Ehrardt Faust collection at Yale University, the Flach collection of the University of Missouri, and the several special collections in the University of Texas.

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GENERAL ITEMS

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